

BINGANG

june '74



BING-GANG
PRESENTED BY
THE CLUB CROSBY

Vol. XXVI, No. 1

June, 1974

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Membership Dues: \$3.00 per year (payable to Priscilla Koernig
at the above address)

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material to Patricia Sullivan at the above address)

We are affiliated with the Australian Club Crosby and the
British Crosby Collector.

Front Cover: Joe Sinnott

Feature Story: Why I Like
Bing Crosby by Graham Reade

An X on your envelope label indicates your subscription to Bingang
expires with this issue. An XX indicates you are already one
issue in arrears and are being sent this issue only as a courtesy.

THE EDITOR'S PAGE

Greetings from the West Coast. I am happily settled in Chico and enjoying my new position at the university here. Have already had the pleasure of a visit from Priscilla and hope that visits with other area members will be possible too. Perhaps the West Coast contingent would be interested in forming a chapter similar to the one operating in the Midwest.

I regret the news that our British representative, Frank Murphy, has had to postpone his trip to the States, but I am glad that it is only a postponement and that we can still look forward to meeting him soon. Ralph Harding, the editor of the Crosby Collector, has been on a whirlwind visit to the U.S. I regret that I was unable to meet him this time but am glad to report that he, too, is planning a return visit.

Upon my arrival in Chico, I found a huge envelope from the Crosby Office awaiting me. Larry Crosby had been thoughtful enough to post a large batch of the handmade get-well cards received by Bing from children. Here is Larry's accompanying letter:

Dear Pat,

Among the thousands of "get well" cards Bing received during his illness, many were from school children.

Herewith are some of the outstanding ones. Thought you would enjoy them.

All have been answered, with a request to the teacher for good grades.

Best to all.

Sincerely, (Larry)

The cards are just a delight, and I regret that they can't be reproduced for the journal so that all could share in them.

The Great American Popular Singers by Henry Pleasants (Stereo Review's London editor) has been published by Simon & Schuster. Wonder of wonders, I understand the name Crosby actually figures prominently in the cast of characters. Ken Gray and I have been incredulous for some time over the way Bing's name is turning up as a footnote in the host of film books released since the nostalgia boom. Those of us who remember it like it really was know that Bing dominated the era.

The nostalgia boom resulted in recent coverage by Time magazine of two interesting organizations, Radio Collectors of America and North American Radio Archives Ltd. I wrote to both on behalf of the club and, if you are interested, contact them directly.

The Radio Collectors of America (Bernard Feitelberg, Pres., 23 Winthrop Rd., Hingham, Mass. 02043) are a band of 20 from the New England area. They meet monthly and pool their resources to purchase radio shows which they then make available to each member. "I'm sure you'll be happy to know that Bing's Crosby's shows, both for Kreft and Philco, are up there among the favorites," Mr. Feitelberg writes. The club also has formed a non-profit, tax-exempt foundation which supplies radio programs to 18 regional libraries for the blind.

The N.A.R.A. is a non-profit educational member-governed organization dating back to Jan., 1973. It was founded to serve the growing public interest in radio history & to promote services which will create a greater appreciation and understanding of radio's past. It does not as yet have permanent office space but the current mailing address is that of its president, Roger W. Hill, P.O. Box 13114, Station E, Oakland, Calif. 94661. Their objectives include the gathering and preservation of radio broadcasts, scripts, publications pertaining to radio history between 1920-1960; dissemination of information through catalogs of their collection, newsletters, a quarterly journal; and maintenance of a circulating library of radio broadcasts on tape.

The proprietor of "The Sea of Records" in San Francisco writes the following: "Thought you might be interested in my experience at MGM Studios (1926-38) I established the first phonograph department for side-line music and among Bing's greatest fans were Joan Crawford, Jean Harlow, Constance Bennett & Marion Davies. Of course, all the stars liked him...Miss Crawford had a standing order (I had a record store on the side) for 6 each of every Bing, also Boswell Sisters for the set, dressing room & her home."

Member Helen Tolton also reported a fascinating recent incident. While in Ukiah, California, she stopped into a sheet music store & there in the "W" section was a brand new copy of "Where the Blue of the Night" with Bing's picture, copyright 1931. Apparently it had been there all these years!

Would appreciate it if those of you who have Crosby sheet music collections would send a listing to me--title, publisher, date. I would like to compile a list for the club. Our hope of having them reproduced for the journal is temporarily suspended because they are larger in size than the journal. Perhaps if there is enough interest they could be eventually reproduced for separate publication.

I extend an invitation to all members to look me up if in the Chico area. If any of the West Coast members would be interested in a more active local Crosby fellowship--perhaps an annual meeting as a start--I would appreciate suggestions and comments.

Hope the summer sun will bring a full recovery to Bing. A happy summer to all.

Pat Sullivan

P.S. Here is a last minute letter from Larry Crosby dated May 24th:

Dear Pat:

We have no data on Bing doing a record titled "Sunshine on my Shoulder."

He has been in Baja enjoying lots of sunshine for several weeks. There are no future plans, except he may go to Spokane for Expo '74."

Best, (Larry Crosby)

REPORT FROM THE WEST COAST

By: Priscilla Koernig

The first part of this year was quite a frightening experience for all of us Bing admirers. I'm sure most of you felt the same way Pat and I did. We didn't really realize how close we felt to Bing until he was ill. Honestly, everytime there was a news bulletin on TV, I'd get tears in my eyes. He seems to be recuperating slowly, but doing better every day. I understand he fell and cracked a rib in the hospital so that is taking longer to heal than the actual operation. I received a very nice handwritten note from him thanking me and the club for the homemade cookies I baked for him when he returned home from the hospital. You will find that reproduced in this journal.

The tournament this year was very boring for me because of Bing not being able to be there. Also, the weather was just terrible. We went anyway, because we already had our reservations and booster badges.

I did manage to see Bing at Laguna Honda again in December. As usual, I enjoyed the show very much. He had Kathryn, Harry and Nathaniel with him. Mary Frances was in school in Mexico. It was really quite a thrill to have your lifetime idol introduce you and call you by name. He and the family sang Christmas songs, but the one that always brings down the house is "White Christmas." He also sang a medley of his hits. While singing "Don't Fence Me In" he forgot the lyrics and Kathryn was prompting him from back stage. He told her to come on out there and sing it--"She used to be a fan of mine!" Kathryn said, "I'm a Texan!" Kathryn and Bing sang a duet, "My Cup Runneth Over."

Bing gave me permission to interview him at the tournament, but this didn't work out because of his illness. I'm sure he will permit this privilege again soon. In fact, now that Pat is in California, I'm hoping we can do this together as soon as possible.

A special thanks to Larry who sent the picture of Bing (Page 29) The other picture came from the company involved with the St. Patricks Day special on TV. I had written to KPIX in San Francisco complaining that they goofed up the first part of the show by putting on Lawrence Welk instead of Bing's special. I received a letter from KPIX apologizing for the technical difficulty. They evidently forwarded my letter to the above mentioned company, as I received three nice 8x10 pictures of Bing filming the show.

On May 2nd a local FM radio station did an 18-hour tribute to Bing on his 70th birthday. From 6 AM to 12 midnight, they played Crosby recordings. It was a very enjoyable day. I phoned the station and talked to one of the disc jockeys, Fred Gerner, to thank him for the tribute. He said the following over the air:

"Received an interesting telephone call a moment ago from Priscilla Koernig. She is the Vice President of the Bing Crosby Fan Club--that's an international organization--and they put out a

journal twice a year--and she just wanted to express her appreciation of the fan club to KMPX for the salute to Bing on his 70th birthday. We're delighted to mention the fan club. She gets to see Mr. Crosby very frequently when he visits Laguna Honda Hospital or down at the Crosby Tournament at Pebble Beach and so forth. So, thank you for calling, Priscilla. We appreciate it very much. I said to her, 'How old are you?' She sounded to me like she was about 18--and she said, 'That's no question to be asking!'--so I withdrew."

Then he had a contest asking, as of Sept. 15, 1970, how many records Bing had sold. 'Course we all know that--300 million. He then added, "Was talking a few minutes ago to Priscilla Koernig, Vice President of the Bing Crosby Fan Club...that (300 million) only represents a fraction of what's around --but a lot of it is available of radio broadcasts that have been preserved over the years--television shows--it goes on & on,--& I'm sure that music is going to be released in years to come."

*So many kind, encouraging words
and prayers came during my illness
I just had to get well!*

Many thanks

Bing Crosby

*Dear Priscilla:
Many thanks
to you and the
Club Crosby for the
fine trip of home made
cookies -
Bing*

MP
HB

May 16, 1974

Dear Priscilla,

Our season at ACT is closing with
"Broadway" and "Cyrano".

Mary Frances has just been accepted
as a student at the San Francisco
Ballet. Nathaniel is pitching and
playing first base for Little League.
And Harry is studying his music.

Bing, of course, is well again. That's
the best news and the most important
activity.

Sincerely,



Kathryn Crosby

Miss Priscilla Koernig
1423 Oak Street
San Mateo, Ca. 94402

REPORT FROM DOWN UNDER

By: Shirley Naylor

Was very sorry to hear that Bing was admitted to the hospital on Dec. 31st. Our papers printed 7 small clippings. I wrote to Bing and sent him a get well card. This year I thought I was the forgotten fan as Christmas came and went and no card from Bing. Actually, it was sent by surface mail and arrived Jan. 31, 1974 (was very lucky to get it as there had been a fire in the hold of one of the ships from the States and a lot of Christmas mail was burnt) I took the card to work and the girls thought it was lovely and wanted to know if the beautifully boxed boxes had real presents in them, so I said I'd write to Bing and ask him. I had my usual decorations--three gold pine cones from Bing's Rising River Ranch--hanging from the picture rail--these were given to me many moons ago by Priscilla.

A most pleasant surprise arrived on Jan. 10th--a programme of Bing's golf tournament and a lovely letter from Bing:

Dear Shirley:

Thanks for your note. Glad you liked the Christmas card and all the other things.

We did the Laguna Honda Show again and it came off very well. Mary Frances wasn't there because she's in school in Mexico. Also studying with a Mexican ballet.

You seem very well taken care of by Patricia Sullivan and Priscilla Koernig with items. If you need anything else, let me know.

Do want to wish you and your family a joyous Christmas and a happy new year.

As Ever, (Signed) Bing Crosby

Bingang arrived on Christmas Eve, is the best journal ever, so much news, and made wonderful reading. As a matter of fact, to coin an Australian phrase, it was really bonza, and made the Christmas hols most enjoyable. Priscilla's article was most enjoyable as usual. I received a Christmas card from her with her two dogs and cats which all my friends liked very much. Mary Brown's article was very interesting and lovely to hear from the land of the long white cloud. The Midwest Chapter is very interesting and the record list by Ken is most acceptable and the places where to buy them is simply great. I was very interested in Ken's paragraph re the old Decca and Festival catalogues. I have the Recorded Music 1951 and Festivals, the World of Sound (date unknown) if he would like to borrow them.

Pat sent me the disc "Tie A Yellow Ribbon/It's Not Where You Start." As my radiogram has been out of order from some time, I just had to hear the disc so I could comment on it for the journal. I took it into town to our Myer Store and asked the girl if she would switch it into one of the booths for a private hearing. As she was inter-

ested, it went over the whole store. I was most sad about "Tie A Yellow Ribbon" and wish Bing hadn't recorded it--the flip side was better.

I had a happy sequel to the Ladies Home Journal article in Nov. 1973. I was in the supermarket and a cardboard display poster was in a basket with a magazine called "The Family Circle" so I asked the girl if I could have the poster. It's only cardboard but looks nice in a small frame.

The world energy crisis has been very bad. We as yet have had no trouble--not so the land of the long white cloud (New Zealand) which has had petrol rationing.

News has run out so must close hoping that the next time I write all will be well with the world. Nearly forgot to mention that the Daily Telegraph had a paragraph on the front page Jan. 30, 1974: "Just a bit about Bob Hope. Bob Hope's appearance at the Opera House will be organized by Sydney promoter, Lew Kidd. I understand he will also do a one-night show with proceeds going to the actors benevolent fund."

* * * * *

REPORT FROM GREAT BRITAIN

By: Pat Sullivan, Editor

Frank has not submitted a report for the journal, so I will quote instead from a recent personal letter. He asks specifically to convey regrets to all the members that his anticipated summer trip to the United States has been cancelled--hopefully to be rescheduled for next summer.

Frank is still tremendously active Crosbywise on the British scene and his weekly series of hospital broadcasts has been increased to 30 minutes due to its popularity and is now being broadcast live. Bing sent the station an autographed photo, and they hope to make his telephone link an annual treat for the Northeast England hospitals.

EVENING CHRONICLE, Wednesday, March 6, 1974

A gift from the 'old groaner'

READERS will recall that just before Christmas those hardworking volunteers who run Radio Tyneside, the hospitals broadcasting service, were keeping their fingers crossed for a good telephone link with Bing Crosby.

As it turned out, America came in loud and clear and "the old groaner" helped to make Christmas even happier for thousands of patients.

Bing obviously enjoyed co-operating with a tiny amateur radio station for a memento in the form of an autographed photograph has just arrived on

programme director Peter Hetherington's desk.

With the photograph is a message from Bing saying he is getting on very well after his recent illness and is away on a fishing trip to recuperate.

Crosby fans may care to know that Frank Murphy presents a half-hour of Bing's recordings at 10 o'clock every Saturday morning on Radio Tyneside.

A look at the sportsman, Bing Crosby

By Ed Neal
Examiner Outdoors Writer

"The Other Bing" was the way editor Jack Samson of Field and Stream put it in the current issue of his magazine as he detailed a recent Alaskan fishing trip with Hillsborough's best known sportsman.

Millions know Bing Crosby as singer, raconteur and golf tournament host. But the public only rarely sees "The Other Bing," the outdoorsman who will travel halfway around the world, if necessary, for a spot of fishing or hunting.

They get an occasional glimpse of Bing in the outdoors through TV segments of ABC's popular American Sportsman series. But few realize he puts as much

back as he takes from the outdoors.

He's a key member of Ducks Unlimited, Trout Unlimited, the Committee for the Atlantic Salmon Emergency and the International Game Fish Association, to mention a few of the conservation organizations to which he belongs.

Not just a passive dues-paying member, either.

He digs in and produces. His efforts generally are credited with playing a leading role in stopping the overharvesting of Atlantic salmon by commercial fishermen.

The Ducks Unlimited story is an oft-told tale of how a small group of sportsmen met in San Francisco in the late '30s, determined to do



BING CROSBY
Due for an award

something about the dwindling continental water-fowl resource.

They attacked the problem at the source, determined to rebuild the ancient nesting grounds in the Canadian prairies which produce four out of five North American ducks. In 37 years the organization they created spent millions of dollars all donated by American sportsmen, to build over a thousand duck factories and restore two million acres of marshland.

And playing an increasingly important role in the Ducks Unlimited picture has been Bing. He's given unstintingly of his time, has narrated several of the popular films which tell the DU story.

One, "The Wetlanders," was judged outdoor docu-

mentary of the year at the eighth annual Outdoor Travel Film Festival. In a dramatic and colorful 25 minutes Bing explains as the film details the building of a duck factory: locating the potential marshland, the planning and surveying, bulldozing and molding the project and finally the production payoff as the new lake yields ducks and geese.

The film is so popular with the Crosby narration that requests to show it must be booked at least six weeks in advance with DU's national

headquarters PO Box 66300, Chicago 60666.

So it's little wonder the San Francisco Ducks Unlimited committee has chosen to honor Bing at its annual Sponsors Dinner, set for the Bohemian Club the night of Dec. 4. It will be a dual awards night for Der Bingle. The proceeds will be used to build another DU duck factory: Lake Bing Crosby.

And Roy Weatherby, head of the Weatherby Arms Co., will be on hand to present the 1973 Weatherby Conser-

vationist of the Year award to Bing. Herman Taylor Jr., national Ducks Unlimited president, is flying out from his Natchitoches, La., home for the affair.

Bids to the dinner do not come cheap. The goal is a minimum kitty of \$20,000 advises chairman Pat Gilligan.

The tab is \$250 per couple for a new sponsor and his lady. "A complete gourmet feast plus many door prizes," Pat adds.

For reservations contact Pat by telephone at 981-0900 or write him at 650 California St., San Francisco, Calif. 94108.



GOLF ADVICE: Bing Crosby's son Harry helps golfing father line up a shot.

Bing Crosby, 69, Tells What It's Like to Raise His Second Family of Teenagers

Bing Crosby has a second batch of growing children in his home now, and thanks to a reduced show-business workload, he's finding more time to enjoy them.

The entertainer, now 69, talked about his children with *The ENQUIRER* at his suburban San Francisco home, and his pride in the youngsters was evident.

"Last year I took Mary Frances — she's 13 — on safari with me to Africa," Bing said, "and she ended up bagging a 13-foot man-eating crocodile. She shot him right in the eye.

"Harry, who's 14, is giving me competition on the golf course. He was just five strokes behind my 74 when we qualified for the Burlingame (Calif.) Country Club tournament."

Both teenagers have show-business ambitions. According to their father, "Harry wants to be a second Burt Bacha-

rach. He writes beautiful music and words.

"Mary hopes to be an actress. She's done a few things for TV and had the lead in one show, but I don't encourage or discourage her at this stage in her life. She's too young.

"As far as golf goes, Harry is getting very good, but like all youngsters he's obsessed with how far he can hit the ball.

"Mary is the tennis player of the family, and she's just won the junior tournament at the local club.

"I'm only about half-ready to deal with a teenage daughter," Bing confided. "To start

with, Mary is 13 going on 22. Boys are predictable, but a girl is a very different person to handle — if you can handle her at all."

The youngest member of Bing's second family is Nathaniel, 11. The singer has four sons by his first wife; three are in show business.



ONLY GIRL: Bing Crosby says his only daughter, Mary Frances, is "13 going on 22."

Ed Sullivan - 1-21-74

The whole country is rooting for ailing Bing Crosby.

Back in the 1960s when I played golf on the Coast with Bing and Bob Hope, Bing said he inherited his singing talent from his father, Spokane's favorite amateur tenor in productions of "Pinafore" and other Gilbert and Sullivan light operas. Crosby made his bow as a pro in 1925 on the stage of Clemmer Theater, Spokane, singing "Red Hot Henry Brown." Bing said two of his greatest thrills happened in 1927 when Paul Whiteman asked Bing and partner Al Rinker to sing with his band and in 1931 when the New York Friars Club tendered him a banquet "and the toastmaster was my all-time idol, George M. Cohan."

Ed Sullivan - 12-14-73

Tony Bennett told Maurice Uchitel that his favorite singers are Sinatra, Crosby and the late Louis Armstrong.

* * *

San Francisco - The Film Festival's opening night this year will probably take the form of a tribute to a major screen personality, and who more fitting for this honor than Bing Crosby? An underrated actor, by the way.

* * *

Herb Caen - San Francisco Examiner & Chronicle

12-17-73: Now we're at the Houston airport as Bing Crosby climbs into a cab, heading for a downtown hotel. En route, the driver described by Bing as "an ample black man of jovial mien, kept sneaking glances in the rear-view mirror, finally venturing, "Anybody ever tell you how much you look like Bing Crosby?" "I'm a much better looking man than Crosby," drawled Bing. Driver, bristling slightly: "Man, you wouldn't mind looking like him if you had his money"... Nearing the hotel, Bing hummed what he calls "a few bars from my hit." And as he got out, the driver looked up sheepishly and grinned, "You dawg, you!"

1-11-74: Impatient patient: Bing Crosby escaped from his room at B'lingame's Peninsula Hosp. the other night and was finally found poking his famous head into rooms down the corridor, cheering up his fellow patients.

1-18-74: Daily Bing Bulletin: Irving Berlin, composer of "White Christmas," among a thousand other hits, phoned from New York to talk to Bing Crosby in B'lingame's Peninsula Hosp. and had a little trouble getting through. An exec at the hospital at first refused to let Bing take the call, saying "That has to be a phony--Berlin died years ago" (he's 86 now, but chipper)...I can now tell you that Bing's unlisted number in Hillsborough was 347-8077 since it was changed yesterday at the request of the harried lillised Crosby butler, Fisher, who groaned "That must have been the best-known unlisted number in the world"...Ten points to all who get the "harried lillised" reference.

5-15-74: At the Stafford Hotel in London last week, the wine steward asked Sonoma's Tom Rooney, "How's Bing?" meaning Crosby, of course, and then added, with an admiring shake of the head, "That bloke, he'd come into England cold and by George he'd pick four out of five winning horses every day--uncanny!" Every member of the Stafford's staff signed a menu and mailed it to Bing, their favorite American.

Art Rosenbaum - San Francisco Examiner & Chronicle

12-27-73: Toufie Blaik, seeing a man drive a Rolls Royce into the Ellis Brooks customer parking lot and, with two youngsters, start to walk across the street to a theater, called out, "sir, you can't leave your car here." The man turned around. Toufie gulped, "Oh, Mr. Crosby. Have a good time and we'll take care of your car."

MY FAVORITE CHRISTMAS SONG by Jeff Wells - National Enquirer - 12-30-73

Bing Crosby made "White Christmas" one of our traditional yule songs but it isn't his favorite Christmas song.

"The song I like to sing at home with my family at Christmas time is 'Silent Night,'" he told the Enquirer.

"I believe 'Silent Night' is the international song of Christmas, sung in every language.

"It is the song which best reflects the purity and nobility of the birth of Christ and reminds mankind of his heritage.

"When I recorded 'White Christmas,' I had a song plugger working for me. When I recorded 'Silent Night,' I had the true spirit of Christmas working for me."

Bing Crosby: Music Today Is Much Better Than When I Started Singing

Bing Crosby is singing praises for today's pop music.

"Music today is exciting, really adventurous and tremendously interesting — it's much better than when I started," the famed 69-year-old crooner told The ENQUIRER in his home near San Francisco.

"When I started out, lyrics were mostly inane and the melodies were repetitious. The instrumentalists used bad harmony and the soloists were often incompetent," the crooner said.

"Today we have such gifted composers as Burt Bacharach — a highly-trained musician who's capable of conducting a symphony — and Paul Simon, Rod McKuen and Carole King.

"It seems the talent of these new musicians is infinite.

"Of course, some of today's music I don't really dig."

Crosby said there are so many good

singers and so much fierce competition in the music industry that "anyone going into the music business today would have to be very brave and very zealous.

"There weren't many singers around when I started singing, and those who were around didn't have access to the outlets that became available to me.

"Really, I have to think that I'd have one chance in a million — even less — of achieving success if I were young and starting out all over again.

"There are many singers, instrumentalists and groups today with amazing ability and inventiveness.

"It's a whole new ball game since I first broke into show business with the 'boo-boo-boo-boo.'"



BING CROSBY
"A whole new ball game."



"A Little Bit of Irish" TV show

'TED' CROSBY, BING'S BROTHER - Associated Press - 12-20-73

Spokane (Wash.)--The 73 year old brother of crooner Bing Crosby, E.J. "Ted" Crosby, has died of cardiovascular collapse...

Crosby, who wore a heart pacemaker, was admitted Sunday night for bladder surgery and died yesterday.

A Tacoma, Wash. native, Crosby lived in Spokane for 72 years. He worked for the Spokane Daily Chronicle, Washington Water Power Co. and most recently was a local representative of a weather modification equipment firm.

Crosby was a past president of the Spokane Press Club and last spring received a Freedom Award from the Washington State Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution.

Crosby in 1946 sued his brother Bing over the sale of shares in the Del Mar, Calif. Turf Club. Survivors include his wife, Margaret; two sons, Howard and Edward of Spokane, and three daughters, Sister Dolores Crosby of Edmonds, Wash., Mrs. Eobert Ferguson of Richmond, Wash., and Mrs. Crosby McManaway of Ipswich, Wash.

* * * * *

DOROTHY MANNERS

Modern Screen
April, 1974



It's OK With Bing:

The reports started coming in slowly. Bing Crosby was in the hospital. Nothing serious, the reports said, just pleurisy, and he was resting comfortably. But the pleurisy led to pneumonia, and the pneumonia to an abcess on the lung. Bing entered the hospital on New Year's Eve, and 10 days later—in good spirits the whole time—began undergoing a series of painful and lengthy tests to find out just what was wrong. Bing's wife, Kathy, and as many of the kids as were allowed, were constantly there to cheer him up and speed his recovery, and undoubtedly, their presence and their prayers helped Bing a great deal. Thousands of letters and cards and flowers arrived daily, as well as calls and visits from old friends like Bob Hope. When the doctors finally determined that Der Bingle had some rare type of African fungus that just wouldn't respond to treatment, and decided to remove a portion of his lung so that the rest of it would heal that much faster, there was a great sigh of relief from all the Crosbys and their friends. They were a bit concerned that the trouble might turn out to be a tumor, but it wasn't, and Bing is recuperating nicely, and should be back home and up and around by the time you read this.

The Truth About Bing Crosby's Lung Operation!



It's been a while since Bing Crosby has been in the news. In fact, there are many kids in the younger generation who know him only through old movies on TV or even older recordings—and they're not even sure that he's still among the living.

But, yes, we're happy to report that Bing is still very much with us—although a recent illness and hospitalization had his family, friends and doctors very worried about the old "groaner."

The illness seemed to strike suddenly. On New Year's Eve Bing was admitted to a local hospital near his home in Hillsborough, California, which he shares with his second wife, Kathy, and the couple's three children, Mary Frances, Harry and /continued on page 73



Last year Bing took family to London for a holiday. From l. that's wife Kathy, Mary Frances and Nathaniel. Son Harry was along, too, but missed the photographer. Maybe having such a young family keeps Bing from looking 70.

30 MAY 1974

BING CROSBY

Nathaniel. The first reports stated that Bing was feeling a little under the weather and possibly had pneumonia since X-rays showed a spot on his lung. But later, physicians became somewhat alarmed when Crosby failed to respond to the usual medication for pneumonia. Naturally, the doctors were aware the spot could be cancer, and it was this suspicion that finally forced his doctors to order surgery.

However, as it turned out, the singer was suffering from a rare fungus infection in his abscessed lung, which physicians discovered after a biopsy was done on the tissue.

After the surgery, Bing's family doctor, Dr. Stanley Hanfling, explained: "Because of the findings of some tissues suggesting the possibility of cancer and because Crosby continued to have inflammation of the abscess in the left lung, the consulting physicians and myself proceeded with surgery."

During the 3½ hours Bing was on the table under the knife, his devoted wife, Kathy Grant Crosby, waited and prayed at the hospital for her husband's complete recovery, as did Mary Frances, Harry and Nathaniel.

Their prayers were answered, and the entire family was reunited just hours after the operation when they were permitted to visit Bing in his hospital room. All in all, it had been a trying and exhausting experience for the entire family, especially Kathy. The days of not knowing exactly what was wrong with her husband had been emotionally draining, and she was glad they were over.

Kathy is still devotedly and completely in love with the complex man she married over 16 years ago. Yes, the Crosbys became man and wife on October 24th, 1957, when the bridegroom was a 54-year-old widower and the bride, a Hollywood starlet with long dark hair and even darker eyes, was only one month short of her 24th birthday.

Kathryn Grant, originally a Baptist from West Columbia, Texas, had converted to Catholicism for her husband during the course of their four-year, on-again, off-again romance.

After her wedding, Kathy seemed relieved they had "finally made it to the altar" and admitted: "Every time between 1954 and 1957 when we decided to get married, some third party or the public would interfere."

This time, however, love triumphed. It is true that the press had a field day with gossips warning, "There's no fool like an old fool," and "She's in her 20s, you're in your 50s; act your age," but Bing and Kathy managed to turn a deaf ear to all the prophets of doom who predicted disaster for their relationship within a year.

They have survived the critics and survived gloriously. They love each other more than they did even on their wedding day 16 years ago, and they have raised three beautiful children. Kathy was able also to give Bing his first little girl, his daughter, Mary Frances, who is the apple of his eye.

"When I first married Bing," Kathy later

recalled, "I understood that what I had in him was the complete man—grown, formed, settled, established, reliable. I wouldn't have to stop him from drinking or playing poker, or whatever habits and hobbies he had acquired. I knew he was not about to change, nor was I about to try and change him.

"Well, you won't believe it," she added with a laugh. "Bing has changed. He has learned. He's a marvelously adaptive person. We live in Hillsborough, California, and you'd think that Bing had lived his whole life in this small suburb of San Francisco, instead of all those years in Los Angeles.

"And he's terrific with the children," she added.

Since her marriage to Bing, Kathy has become a registered nurse in the state of California, an accredited teacher in the Hillsborough school system, a member of the board of regents of Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles and an actress who is a favorite spokeswoman for Bing's own Minute Maid orange juice.

"I do all these things," she notes, "because I'm very lucky in having a husband who allows me to be who I am. I have a great deal of privacy, and I have lots of time to fulfill myself.

"Bing is not, as you may know, a particularly demonstrative man. Emotional and poetic exhibitions are simply not part of his nature. He underplays. Although I must tell you that the sexual attraction between us is still very exciting, very thrilling and very stimulating."

Bing's incredible energy and his enjoyment of life—despite the fact that he is almost 70 years old, was actually responsible for his recent illness, since doctors have speculated that he contracted his rare fungus infection on a safari he took to Africa with his family last year.

Bing describes himself as a modest man, who has been exceptionally lucky. Even his autobiography, penned years ago, he chose to call *Call Me Lucky*. His wife, on the other hand is an ambitious girl who doesn't stop for a minute.

"Almost from the day she was born," says one old schoolmate, "she has been exceedingly ambitious. She has had to prove things."

One thing Kathy Grant Crosby proved is that when her husband needed her, as he did during his recent confinement, she was there. She was all the support he needed to see him through this trying illness. She has also proved that after 16 years of marriage, her ability to give him love, respect and the aura of youth are, in part, the formula for her successful marriage.

The doctors say that even though they had to remove two-fifths of "Der Bingle's" lung, Bing's activities will not have to be curtailed. He can still go hunting and fishing with old buddies like Phil Harris. Not even his singing will be impaired by the operation. His doctors have given him only *one* restriction—he must *stay out of Africa!*

Bing is very thankful that the fungus was caught in time. And that's due to Kathy's

nursing training. When he didn't respond to home care for his illness, she made him consult the family doctor. That may have saved his life as the fungus could have spread.

Bing Crosby is quite a man—and it's good to have him back on his feet. And all those young generation types who don't know who he is had better start taking notice. He may be around a lot longer than all of us at the rate he's going!

(ML)

MOVIE LIFE
May, 1974

Bing will play some tennis-- 'My right side is all right'

By Vernon Scott

"The Old Groaner is still groaning," Bing Crosby said just before boarding his own plane for an Easter holiday at his house in Las Cruces, Mexico.

The 69 year old crooner underwent surgery in January for removal of part of his left lung and has been recuperating slowly ever since.

"I read some newspaper stories about how sick I was and it gave me quite a turn," said Bing in his rich baritone.

His voice was strong and his attitude jaunty.

"I'm coming along, but it takes time. I've had operations before but this was a tough one. They took out two-fifths of my left lung. Now I've got a 35-inch scar on my back. It's a beauty.

"There was a report my trouble was due to an African fungus. Not so. It was a fungus, all right, with an abscess the size of a tangerine. But I could have picked it up anywhere. It's a type of fungus that's common in Central California."

Crosby is still trying to put on a little weight. He hopes to improve his color in the sun at the tip of Baja California.

"Kathryn (his wife) is working at the theater (ACT)," he said. "She won't be making the trip. But as usual I'll be taking the kids — Harry, Nathaniel and Mary Frances — with me. We'll be fishing for marlin, sailfish and some of the other big ones.

"I've been getting stronger every day. Sometimes in the afternoon I get out to the golf course for a little pitch and putt practice. It will be a while before I can take a full golf swing.

"But I plan to play some tennis because my right side is all right. The left, where they did the operating, is still a bit weak."

Crosby won't return to work until early summer when he will go to Hollywood to tape a television comedy special with Bob Hope, Pearl Bailey and Mitzi Gaynor. Later he and his family will film their annual Christmas show.

"I plan to do some hunting as usual this fall," he said.

"And in the meantime I've kept busy planning the Crosby Golf Tournament for next year. And I'm on some committee for game preservation and the organizations to keep our streams and rivers clean."

During his convalescence Bing was visited by sons from his first marriage — Gary, Dennis, Philip and Lindsay.

He received more than 12,000 letters from fans around the world urging him to get well.

"I wrote out a form letter and answered all of those kind letters," he said. "And I personally replied to the friends who checked in. I had no idea that many people were interested in me. Maybe people thought I was sicker than I was. I must have been hovering on the brink.

"But I have no plans for taking life easy. I can't. I have to chauffeur the kids to dancing lessons, Little League and ballet."

S. F. Examiner
April 6, 1974

STEREO REVIEW March, 1974

BING CROSBY: *Rare Early Recordings, 1929-1933*. Bing Crosby (vocals); various orchestras. *My Kinda Love*; *Let's Do It*; *I'm in Seventh Heaven*; *Great Day*; *Face the Music Medley*; *Brother Can You Spare a Dime?*; *Street of Dreams*; *I've Got the World on a String*; *My Honey's Lovin' Arms*; and four others. BIOGRAPH BLP-C13 \$5.98 (available from Biograph Records, P.O. Box 109, Canaan, N.Y. 12029).

Performance: **Pleasant memories**
Recording: **Authentic to a fault**

There was a time during the Thirties when, if you turned on the family radio, nine chances

out of ten, it seemed, Bing Crosby's voice would emerge from it. Here was cool before the word was invented, a bland, good-humored, reassuring sort of sound which, what with his movie appearances, his records and his radio turns, practically sang us out of the Great Depression.

Mr. Crosby's "rare early recordings" are supplied in this collection so conscientiously undoctored that some of them come complete with the original cracks, ticks, and needle chatter. Yet "Der Bingle," as he was coyly called in his heyday for some reason, makes everything musical sound smooth as cream anyhow. The earliest records have been garnered from New York sessions for Okeh and Columbia in 1928 and 1929. The singer is in distinguished company, but he is not yet his recognizable crooning self. In *My Kinda Love*, *Let's Do It*, and *I'm in Seventh Heaven*, the voice already reveals that relaxed quality but is surprisingly pallid and undistinguished. Most of the time, in fact, the not-yet-celebrated Mr. Crosby is only a member of a trio. But the accompanists! The Dorsey Brothers, Glenn Miller, Roy Barge, Bix Beiderbecke — names of the first magnitude in the history of jazz and pops. As we move forward to the records Crosby made for Brunswick in the early Thirties, he begins to emerge rapidly as the self we knew — cheering up the penniless populace of the period with *Great Day*, *I've Got the World on a String*, *Someone Stole Gabriel's Horn*, and that phony, romantic Southland of Sewanee Rivers and tapdancer-infested levees in *There's a Cabin in the Pines*. But Crosby could move us close to tears, too, in those days, when he chanted the sad lyrics of the *Blue Prelude* or *Buddy, Can You Spare a Dime?* These performances hold up remarkably well. And the pageant of name players in the background unfolds with startling spectacularity: Bunny Berigan, Benny Goodman, Joe Venuti, Paul Whiteman, the Mills Brothers, Matty Malneck, Victor Young. A fascinating entry in the current nostalgia sweepstakes.

P.K.



That Old Drive

Singer Bing Crosby is bringing his golf game around while vacationing at his home at Las Cruces, Mexico. Crosby underwent lung surgery January 13 and was confined to Peninsula Hospital for

two weeks. He flew to Mexico a week ago to rest, improve his color and work on his golf game. Crosby plans to return to work this summer, appearing in a television comedy special.

Kathy Crosby: Bing's Illness Was a Traumatic Experience but Proved How Close We Are as a Family

By AL COOMBES 5-19-74 Enquirer

"It was a very traumatic experience for all of us — but an experience that proved how close we are as a family." That's how Bing Crosby's wife, Kathy, describes her 69-year-old husband's recent illness, surgery and convalescence.

"Bing and I came out of this thing with the greatest admiration for our three children," Mrs. Crosby said. "They handled the situation very maturely, which made us extremely proud of them."

Crosby, who's been married to Kathy for 16 years, was admitted to Peninsula Hospital in Burlingame, Calif., last December 31.

On January 8, surgeons removed a nonmalignant tumor from his lung.

"Our 14-year-old daughter, Mary Frances, attends high school in Mexico," Mrs. Crosby said. "She flew back to be at Bing's bedside in the hospital."

"It was delightful to see the cheerful air she put on when she was visiting with her father."

The Crosbys have two other children — Harry, who's 15, and Nathaniel, who's 12. Nathaniel was away at private school through most of Bing's illness, but Harry was with his father almost daily.

"Harry would bring his guitar and play for his father," Mrs. Crosby said. "It was a delightful thing just to sit around Bing's bed, quietly, as a family, while Harry strummed delicately for his small audience. Bing's very proud of Harry's talent and the music probably helped Bing when he needed help most."

Mrs. Crosby said Bing's illness was often the topic of conversation at home, but added it was always discussed in a positive way.

"We are terribly positive people," she said. "And I think the great thing about the kids was the fact that their morale was always high when they visited their father. Their good spirits rubbed off."

Crosby left the hospital January 27, and spent the next six weeks convalescing at home.

"Bing has always been a special person to me," Mrs. Crosby said. "But when he realized how ill he was, he faced it by becoming an even more delightful person."

"During the many hours we spent at his bedside, we suddenly found that we had time to talk to each other. We talked at length about things we never had time to discuss before because of our busy everyday lives. And Bing and I suddenly realized just how precious time is."

'In the hospital we talked at length about things we never had time to discuss before'

Bing to Return To Work Soon

LA CRUCES, Mexico (AP) — Aging American crooner Bing Crosby, now recovering from an operation to remove a nonmalignant lung growth, says he plans to return to work soon.

Crosby, who will turn 70 on May 2, is recuperating in the isolated and exclusive resort of Las Cruces on the southernmost tip of the Baja California Peninsula.

He is living with his family at the same hotel where San Francisco newspaper executive Randolph A. Hearst and his family are staying to get away from the pressures of the kidnaping of their daughter, Patricia.

Hearst and Crosby are neighbors at the Hillsborough, Calif., area near San Francisco.

"We've got a one hour (TV) special with Mitzi Gaynor, Pearl Bailey and Bob Hope coming out this fall as well as several programs for The American Sportsman which will be conservation oriented," said Crosby in an interview at his cottage in Las Cruces.

He said he plans to tape the shows as soon as he returns to the United States in a few weeks.

Crosby underwent surgery Jan. 13 to remove a fungus growth the size of an orange from his lungs.

"It began with a pain in

my left arm like bursitis. I went to a doctor who took some X-rays and then did what they call a scan which means injecting a dye into your veins.

"Before long I was on the table and they had laid open my whole back and took out the growth which they identified as a rare fungus called necardioses.

"The doctor asked me where I'd been and I gave him a list of places which included Africa. 'Aha' he said, 'it must be Africa then,' but it turned out that the disease was most prevalent in central California and not Africa but they were busy looking for something exotic to notice," he said.

"This is a great place to recuperate," Crosby said with a grin as he relaxed in his cottage. He wore a flow-ered sports shirt with short sleeves and gray corduroy pants. His face was tanned.

"It is warm and balmy," he added. "I've been knocking out some golf balls and even playing a little tennis."

"I walk a couple of miles per day and have been getting in some exercise," he added.

Though Crosby was an avid hunter several years ago, now he has turned into a "strict conservationist," he said. But he still enjoys fishing, he added.



LONGTIME STAR Bing Crosby is taking life easy after undergoing successful major surgery.

Regaining His Health After Major Surgery

'Old Groaner' Bing Crosby Whipping Back Into Shape

By PRESTON DuQUESNE

After undergoing the most serious crisis in his life, Bing Crosby is gradually regaining his health.

"It's going to take time," says Dr. Stanley Hanfling, the Old Groaner's family physician. "Bing knows that, but we play it as it goes."

"He's undergone the most major surgery he can get and he took it well... very nonchalant. That's his style, isn't it?"

Early in January, anxious surgeons cut out a piece of the 69-year-old singer's diseased left lung.

"It was about the size of one of my golf balls," says Bing with a bright smile, his blue eyes twinkling.

Still a little pale after his ordeal, Der Bingle has been leading a quiet life, rambling around his \$2 million estate in California like an English coun-

"I'm a very good practicing Catholic. Sure I prayed a lot but I knew it was no use making a big deal of it. I knew how serious it was. I was lucky to get at it as soon as I did."

—BING CROSBY

try squire.

Letters from all parts of the world continue to pour in to his home at Hillsborough, a suburb of San Francisco, wishing him a speedy recovery.

Bing is quick to reassure his fans that he was not suffering from lung cancer, as some suspected but a rare disease which doctors say he picked up in Africa.

After a near brush with death, the singer pulled through, following several days of post-operative intensive care.

"I'm a very good practicing Catholic," he says philosophically. "Sure I prayed a lot but I knew it was no use making a big deal of it. I knew how serious it was. I was lucky to get at it as soon as I did."

Although he hasn't performed in public for some time, Bing says he is still in fine voice.

The famed Crosby croon has been heard by more people than any other singer in the world. He has sold over 400 million records.

Naturally, there are a lot of folks hoping Bing recovers.



Bing Swings Back to Health

Only a few months ago, Bing Crosby was in an intensive care unit following an operation for the removal of part of his left lung. Now he is well on the way to recovery — and, as these photos show, taking things easy at his estate near San Francisco. "I'm not playing golf yet," says 69-year-old Bing. "But I'm up and about and able to take a look at my mail and go for a stroll." While in hospital, Bing received thousands of letters from well-wishers. "I was overwhelmed," he says. "I really didn't know there was that much interest."



National Enquirer
June 9, 1974

WHY I LIKE BING CROSBY by Graham Reade

To start with, I suppose, I should tell you a little about myself. I am one of those who, by and large, is dedicated to the almost impossible task of possessing every recording that Bing Crosby has made. I virtually have a complete collection of his commercially issued records, and, as well, a fairly large collection of what we collectors tend to call, non commercial material, in other words of radio, film, T.V. material, interviews and the like.

My interest in Bing Crosby had it's beginnings in the late 40's and early 50's. My mother liked him, and, she, I suppose, more than anyone else was responsible for nurturing my interest. I seem to remember, she always took me to see his films in my younger days, a habit I never grew out of, and thank goodness for that. And then we always listened to his radio shows, the Philco, Chesterfield and General Electric series, which to us in Australia, were the Voice of America Bing Crosby shows. Yes, I grew up on a steady diet of Bing Crosby, and as I became a little older, I read articles about him, and met others who liked him, and some who knew him, and in time I developed an admiration for Bing Crosby that extended beyond his records. I developed an admiration for Bing Crosby the man.

But we must start with Bing Crosby the singer, whose voice, Decca Records used to say, had been heard by more people than that of any other human being who ever lived.

There is something totally unique about the Crosby way of singing a song. He has had many imitators, but none have ever effectively been able to copy his seemingly relaxed and personable way with a lyric. Part of the secret is his uncanny sense of phrasing and rhythm, in which you can hear the sublt jazz influences of Eddie Lang, Bix, the Dorsey Brothers, Jack Teagarden, Joe Venuti, Louis Armstrong and others, with whom he worked in his formative years. Allied to this, there is his sense of humour and personality, both integral parts of Crosby and the Crosby style. Then we can't forget the tonal quality of his strong baritone voice. Bing Crosby is a singer, this is something no one can deny whether they like him or not.

The voice today has deepened to the extent that you can almost count the vibrations as he articulates with all the punchy warmth of a well played string bass. To me, this has enriched his sound, but unfortunately it has come at the expense of his upper register.

The "Bing 'n Basie" album is a good example of modern day Bing, and of how well he is still singing. The songs suit him to a tee and include some of the better recent contemporary pop tunes, and Sammy Nestico's arrangements provide the sort of punchy, swinging backings that Bing, these days seems to like. It is good to hear Bing working with an arranger who is sympathetic to his needs. Notice how cleverly Nestico uses the orchestra to take care of the extreme high notes, without drowning the voice with sound. Then Basie's clever, sly piano punctuations, sprinkled about here and there throughout the album, provide the finishing touches, as Bing delivers his phrases will all the care and expertise and charm that has always been a part of records he has enjoyed recording. If nothing else, this album shows that Bing Crosby can still teach today's up and coming young singers a thing or two about song interpretation.

And so does his recent single "It's Not Where You Are" / "Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Ole Oak Tree". Both are good songs and Bing sings them well. The accompaniments this time are under the direction of one time Benny Goodman trombonist and arranger, Billy Byers, and are noticeably similar to those on the Basie disc. They complement the easy Crosby flow well. At heart I think Bing is still Paul Whiteman's number one Rhythm Boy. Bing, what about building an album around these two tracks?

Bing has said in recent interviews that he probably won't be making many more records. He says he doesn't like his singing these days and turns his new records off before they are half way through. I think Bing is being a little too critical of himself and hope that these and other recently recorded discs have sold in good enough quantities for him to remain active.

There are many suggestions for new albums that one could make. I have already made one. Then what about an album similar to those Perry Como and Frank Sinatra have been recording recently, or perhaps a reflective album, patterned after a song he sang recently on TV "In My Own Lifetime I want to see the fighting cease and my sons enjoy the fruits of peace....." might be a good idea. "Child of the Wilderness" and "The Men in My Little Girls Life" would be good songs to include in such an album. But one could go on and on making suggestions. We all, probably, could come up with some good ideas, and it isn't important whose suggestions Bing might follow, only that he keep recording.

But back to the subject in hand, why I like Bing Crosby. So far I haven't talked about any of his earlier records. They, as we well know, are legion. I am not one of those who have a particular favourite period in Bing's career. I have enjoyed each stage in his career for different reasons. In the early years it was the voice, the strong young voice, and then later, a mellower voice in which the personality came more to the fore.

Even early Whiteman period recordings like "Muddy Water", "I'm Coming Virginia", "Wa Da Da", "Tain't So Honey" and "My Suppressed Desire" with it's Louis Armstrong derived licks, reveal a sense of confidence and flare for rhythm that was unusual for the time. Out of these records and others like them grew that skill for impromptu ad-libbing that later was to become such an essential part of Crosbyana.

Then came those first solo Columbia sides, recorded in March 1929, which reveal a young singer searching for a style, not nearly as confident as he had been previously, but singing in an almost folky manner with overtones of sophistication. The style had developed a little further.

Then came that memorable period with Gus Arnheim. His phrasing was perhaps still a little stiff, but he sang well - oh, didn't he sing well. During this period he made those silly little movies for Mack Sennett. They, perhaps, didn't provide a great test of his acting ability, but they were entertaining and introduced another avenue through which his talent was to develop.

They were an attempt to introduce Bing to a wider audience through the then new media of talking pictures, and at first he wasn't taken too seriously, but he caught on - oh, how he caught on - and soon we were hearing him on radio and records and seeing him in movies as a star.

The radio and Hollywood era had arrived. To many this is the golden era of Bing Crosby, and it's not hard to understand why. He sang confidently and he sang well, and he sang good songs, mainly ballads, torch songs if you like, and as I listen to those records now, I think it was the way he under-stated the lyrics and personalised them, that made him so popular.

People seemed to have had their fill of the usual run of aggressive male baritone singers of this era and Crosby came along with a style that was different. They called it "The Crosby Cry".

He sang with meaning, but he didn't shout the lyrics. He used a microphone as it was meant to be used to communicate more effectively with his audiences, and he showed he could be as emotionally effective as the next singer without raising his voice level.

There is a relaxed air about his singing that those depression years probably needed. He whistled and he hummed and he buh-buh-boomed, with a pervasive jazz feeling and a fine sense of the ad-lib, and he brought what was almost a casual intimacy to popular music. Occasionally too he tended towards the dramatic and gave us some beautiful, pre-Sinatra examples of how to sing a good ballad. Some commentators would have us believe that there was no such thing as good ballad singing before Sinatra. This is not true.

Crosby records like "She Takes me to Paradise", "Try a little Tenderness", "You're Beautiful Tonight My Dear", "My Love", "Blue Prelude", "How deep is the Ocean", "I've got to sing a Torch Song", "I'm Thru with Love" and "Out of Nowhere" were made well before Sinatra came onto the scene.

Let me say here and now I like Sinatra and think he's a fine singer, one of the best. But I would never say he is a better singer than Bing, nor Bing a better singer than he. I just happen to like Bing Crosby's approach more, that's all. His voice and personality appeal to me more. And, that, I think, is the real difference between the two. They are both great singers, each with different voice textures and personalities. Of course Sinatra's style grew out of Crosby's and he adapted it to his own individual personality. This is fact and Sinatra admits it.

Jazzmen may have been largely responsible for influencing the Bing Crosby style, but they weren't his only influences. There was Red McKenzie. Bing has often talked of how much McKenzie influenced him, and that, he thinks of him as one of the great popular singers. Of course it can be argued that McKenzie was a strongly influenced jazz singer. Then there is Al Jolson. "For a while I tried to sing like Al" says Bing in his autobiography. His record of "High Water" with Whiteman, recorded in 1928, is a good example. Perhaps, too, Morton Downey played his part in influencing Bing. Downey's intimate style, the way he used a microphone suggest that he could have been one of Bing's influences. But one could go on and on suggesting others who may or may not have been an influence on Bing. It is interesting to speculate sometimes though.

Now we come to the Decca period, when the style matured and Bing, the personality evolved, the Jack Kapp era I suppose you could say. Under Kapp he widened his repertoire and made a lot of good records, in fact he made a lot of great records, "White Christmas", "Silent Night", "Too-ra-loo-ra-loo-ral" and "Galway Bay" among many, records that have become an important part of popular music history. He made a lot of good records for Decca, many just as good, if not better

than those already named, but they unfortunately didn't sell as well, and so won't go down in the history books with the same sort of stature as those already named.

His records through this era and later did capture his personality well, as did his films and radio shows. Bing has often said, he always plays himself and perhaps this is true, to a certain extent. But let us not forget, he did create a lasting original character. Think about it. The Crosby we know is an easy going but shrewd sort of guy. Perhaps at times he is a little too carefree, but he is never irresponsible, and always tolerant and firm. That he created a credible, warm and friendly and likeable character from these apparent contradictions, is in itself a tribute to his talent.

He always manages to emerge, even from his worst records and films and radio and television shows, and he has made his share of them, as a musically capable singer and fine actor, and yet no one ever talks of him as a perfectionist, such is the strength and perfection of his characterization.

As a singer, he has shown a remarkable resistance to musical junk, and shown a rare selectivity in his choice of songs, a record that, I think, would even be the envy of Sinatra, Como, Andy Williams and others, especially Andy Williams. Sometime make us a list for yourself of the composers who have written songs especially for him. It's impressive, I'll warn you. Irving Berlin must head the list, and then there were Rodgers and Hart, Robin and Rainger, Gordon and Revel, Burke and Van Heuson, Livingston and Evans, Hoagy Carmichael, Jimmy Monaco, Johnny Mercer, and even Gershwin and Porter, and others too numerous to mention here. Some, led by Bing himself, would say this was largely due to Jack Kapp's influence, but I wonder. All these composers wanted Bing to sing their songs, and he didn't have to sing them. Bing says he has always been a good listener, this is characteristic of the man, but he always had to make the decision. Others could make suggestions, and undoubtedly they did and wisely so, but in the end Bing always had to say yes or no.

To some, acting has been the most durable aspect of his talent. Perhaps in one way it has. Few would try to deny that he is one of the finest actors that the film industry has known. He did create an original lasting screen character who is equally at home in the farcical situations of the "Road" films, in good light romantic comedies like "Here Comes the Groom" and "High Society", and in the high drama of "Man on Fire", "Country Girl" and more recently in "Dr. Cook's Garden" in which he played a murderer and gave us convincing film tragedy.

But as a singer he has been the source and inspiration of every singer who has come along since, and still is. Sinatra, Sammy Davis, Dean Martin, Perry Como, Andy Williams and numerous others, all acknowledge this and have paid homage to him. He has become an institution. For want of a better term, I suppose you could say, he has become the grand old man of popular music.

Why do I like Bing Crosby? For all the many reasons I have already dwelt long upon, and for his stature as a human being.

Peggy Lee once told a story that I think bears repeating here. "The first time I met him", Peggy recalls, "he knew all the little things about me, about my house, even about Dave's health (her first husband Dave Barbour), which wasn't too good at the time. He asked me about them, just as if he'd always known me. Bing wants to know about people, all about them. I think that's why he's so happy."

There are numerous stories like that, that I could have retold, all really saying the same thing.

Then there is his selfless, never publicised work for charity and people in need. The full story of his wartime experiences entertaining troupes during the last world war has never been told, he didn't want it publicised so we are told. But some stories did get around, such as the occasion in war torn London when he sang "Pennies From Heaven" to a huge crowd from the balcony of a well known Soho Restaurant. For a little while he made them forget their worries and dream of a better future. Then we can't forget how he has worked to promote sport and in particular golf as a healthy form of recreation and out of this grew the Bing Crosby Youth Fund, which has raised over three million dollars to help youth in need.

Then there is his work for Laguna Honda Hospital, which I hope, someday, someone will research and write an article on.

"I think he still finds it odd that people make such a thing about it - all this adulation - it never affects him in any way. Once he enters the front door he's just the father of three children and a couple of dogs" says Alan Fisher the Crosby's English butler.

Bing Crosby is an unassuming God fearing man, vitally concerned with the world of today. "I worry what kind of world my children are going to find when they grew up," he says. "It's ten times as tough as the world we had to face." "Kathryn and I have a big job preparing them for it. But we're working on it; doing the best we can."

Someone once described Bing Crosby's rise to fame from his humble beginnings to multi-million dollar opulence as nothing short of inspirational.

"This idea sounds strictly out of the popper to me" wrote Bing in his autobiography. "In this country we like to tell our youngsters that the way to succeed is by hard work and self-sacrifice. If you read my story, it'll be obvious to you - it's obvious to me - that I haven't worked very hard. The things I've done are the things I've wanted to do. Doing them was no great sacrifice. And I've been heavily paid for having fun while I did them. Singing or movie acting has never been drudgery for me. So I don't know that my story contains an inspirational point of view. However, it is certainly shot full of another American commodity - luck."

Luck, yes, I suppose that had a little to do with it. Bing's mother always believed it was her prayers. Then I have a feeling that skill and talent had something to do with it too, don't you? Maybe it was a combination of all three.

I am very aware of the inadequacies in what I have written. There is probably so much that I haven't mentioned that many will feel should be part of any article that tries to show an appreciation of Bing Crosby.

I have tried to tell some of the reasons why I admire Bing Crosby. Perhaps some of my reasoning might provoke others to try and elucidate further. I certainly hope so.

**'Dixie,' a Musical Picture on the
Life of Dan Emmett, With
Bing Crosby Starred, Makes
Its Bow at the Paramount**

DIXIE, screen play by Karl Tunberg and Dorrell Ware; adapted by Claude Ruyon from a story by William Rankin; directed by A. Edward Sutherland; at Paramount; new music by Johnny Burke and James Van Heusen. At the Paramount:
Dan Emmett.....Bing Crosby
Mildie Cook.....Dorothy Lamour
Jean Mason.....Marjorie Reynolds
Mr. Bones.....Billy de Wolfe
Mr. Whitlock.....Lynne Overman
Mr. Cook.....Raymond Walburn
Mr. Pellham.....Eddie Foy Jr.
Mr. Mason.....Grant Mitchell
Minstrel Dancer.....Louis DaPrun

By BOSLEY CROWTHER

Gentlemen (and ladies), be seated—at the Paramount Theatre, that is to say—if you are interested in some old-time minstrel capers tossed off in a Technicolor film. For songs and jigs and funny sayings are what Paramount is delivering about 40 per cent of the time in a ruffled and reminiscent picture entitled "Dixie," which came to that theatre yesterday. Otherwise the remainder of the picture is mainly and not so spiritedly absorbed in a largely fictitious story of Dan Emmett, the original "Virginia Minstrels" man and the author of the rousing song "Dixie"—a role which the old booper, Bing Crosby, plays.

When the minstrels in their any, long, white trousers, swallowtail coats and high silk hats jabbering and kyaw-kyaw-gawing and flinging their lithe legs around, the film has a full exuberance. Raoul Pene du Bois has dressed them up in brilliant clothes, and a quartet of uninspired writers has raided the warehouse for some old but safe

jokes. And when Bashtful Bing is warbling such sparkless but adequate songs as "Sunday, Monday or Always," "She's From Missouri" or "A Horse That Knows the Way Back Home," it is easy to sit back and listen. There is also a dash of liveliness in the wholly apochryphal climax which pretends to show how "Dixie" was born.

But when the story goes weakly meandering into a pointless, confused romance between Dan and a New Orleans hoyden, played airily by Dorothy Lamour, and then marries him off to an old sweetheart who is crippled (Marjorie Reynolds), it is labored and dull. (Miss Lamour doesn't do any singing; just flounders around and plays straight.) Raymond Walburn, the late Lynne Overman and Eddie Foy Jr. puff and prance as minstrel men in a manner which is more entertaining than that of a newcomer, in a parallel role, named Billy de Wolfe. Mr. de Wolfe, with

some coaching, might do in an amateur show, but he is definitely a minus quantity in a spot generally filled by Bob Hope.

Indeed, the fact is that none of the picture has the jubilating spirit and dash that should go with an old-time minstrel story. There's a great movie in that subject yet. And Paramount had a nerve to make a picture in which Bing—and he alone—has one hit song.

Jo 24, 1943, 26:2

**'Going My Way,' Comedy-
Drama With Bing Crosby and
Barry Fitzgerald, at Para-
mount—New Film at Palace**

GOING MY WAY, screen play by Frank Butler and Frank Cavett; from a story by Leo McCarey; produced and directed by Mr. McCarey for Paramount; songs by Johnny Burke and James Van Heusen. At the Paramount:
Father Chuck O'Malley.....Bing Crosby
Jenny Linden.....Risë Stevens
Father Fitzgibbon.....Barry Fitzgerald
Ted Haines Jr.....James Brown
Carol James.....Jean Heather
Mrs. Carmody.....Eily Malyon
Father O'Dowd.....Frank McHugh
Tony Scapone.....Stanley Clements
Haines Sr.....Gene Lockhart
Mr. Belknap.....Porter Hall
Tomasso Bonanni.....Fortunio Bonanova
and
The Robert Mitchell Boy Choir

By BOSLEY CROWTHER

Having hit about as high in his profession as any average man would hope to hit—and that is to say the top notes in the musical comedy league—Bing Crosby has switched his batting technique (or had it switched for him) in his latest film, "Going My Way." And—would you believe it?—old Bing is giving the best show of his career. That's saying a lot for a performer who has been one of the steadiest joys of the screen. But, in this Leo McCarey film, now at the Paramount, he has definitely found his sturdiest role to date.

For in this, Mr. Crosby's first picture with a comparatively serious dramatic theme—and also the first in which his singing is not heavily depended upon—he has been beautifully presented by Mr. McCarey, who produced and directed the film. And he has been stunningly supported by Barry Fitzgerald, who plays one of the warmest characters the screen has ever known. As a matter of fact, it is a cruel slight to suggest that this is Mr. Crosby's show. It is his and Mr. Fitzgerald's together. And they make it one of the rare delights of the year.

For "Going My Way" is the story—rich, warm and human to the core—of a progressive young Catholic priest who matches his wits and his ideas with those of the elderly pastor of a poor parish—a parish which the young priest

is tacitly sent to conduct. It is the story of new versus old customs, of traditional age versus youth. And it is a story of human relations in a simple, sentimental, honest vein.

But it is far from a serious story—in the telling, anyhow. It is as humored and full of modern crackle as a Bing Crosby film has got to be. From the moment that Mr. Crosby shows up at St. Dominic's Church in a faded athletic costume to face the breathless skepticism of Mr. Fitzgerald until the final (and somewhat obvious) fadeout, when Mr. Crosby goes away in the night—the parish's treasury replenished and Mr. Fitzgerald comfortably wrapped in his old mother's arms—it is a delightful and witty case of sparring, with perfect dignity, between the two men.

**THE FILMS OF
BING CROSBY -
Part 7**

**Reviews from the
New York Times**

**Pat Sullivan
Compiler**

There is the beautiful moment when Mr. Fitzgerald, while displaying his parish garden to the young priest, exclaims that it is a wonderful place to meditate and then adds, slyly, "You do—meditate?" There is the charming scene in which Mr. Crosby escorts the weary old gentleman to his bed, and then is surprised to discover that the reverent ancient likes "a drop of the craiture" now and then. And there is that simply exquisite sequence in which Mr. Fitzgerald goes off in a huff because Mr. Crosby is testing the neighborhood roughnecks in a vocal rendering of "Three Blind Mice."

Yes, there are musical passages in the picture. They come when Mr. Crosby occasionally sings a modern song bearing the title of the picture, another new air and a couple of old timers. They also come—and more magnificently—when Risé Stevens, who is trickily worked in, sings an aria from "Carmen," "Ave Maria" and the title song, too. And Mr. Crosby and the Robert Mitchell Boy Choir (dressed up like neighborhood kids) do very amusingly by a number called "Swinging on a Star."

The only criticism of the production—and of the excellent script which Frank Butler and Frank Cavett wrote—is that it runs to an excess. It is more than two hours long. And in that time there are certain stretches when the momen-

tum somewhat lags. But otherwise no exceptions are taken. In addition to Mr. Crosby and Mr. Fitzgerald, Frank McHugh, Miss Stevens, Jean Heather and Stanley Clements—especially the latter as a genial tough—give thoroughly good performances. They enrich this already top-notch film with a vigorous glow of good spirit. "Going My Way" is a tonic delight.

My 3, 1944, 25:2

Crosby With the Fleet

HERE COME THE WAVES, original screen play by Allan Scott Ken Englund and Zion Myers, music by Harold Arlen; lyrics by Johnny Mercer; produced and directed by Mark Sandrich for Paramount. At the Paramount.

Johnny Cabot.....	Bing Crosby
Sadie and Rosemary Allison.....	Betty Hutton
Windy.....	Sonny Tufts
Ruth.....	Ann Doran
Tex.....	Gwen Crawford
Dorothy.....	Nel Nell
Lieut. Townsend.....	Catherine Craig
Isabel.....	Marjorie Henshaw

By BOSLEY CROWTHER

Paramount and its favored son, Bing Crosby, aren't going precisely the same way that they went in

Mr. Crosby's last picture—and everyone knows which way that was—but they are taking an agreeable turn together in "Here Come the Waves," which trooped into the Paramount yesterday. They are ambling along that vein of comedy, with vamped-in music, that Mr. Crosby used to rove, and they have Sonny Tufts and Betty Hutton as convivial companions this time. Sure, the traveling is nothing like as charming as it was on that last prize-winning tour, but it offers a few attractive vistas and several gaily amusing jolts.

In this one our old friend, the Bingle, dons mufti for nautical attire and plays a swoon-throwing crooner who becomes a member of Uncle Sam's fleet. As a go he runs into Miss Hutton playing twin sisters, both of them Waves—one a dignified lady and the other a jive-happy chick. He also becomes somewhat violently involved with Mr. Tufts, who is likewise a side-wheeling sailor with a strong luff toward one of the girls. And, what with confusion of identities and a Wave recruiting show to put on, a plot of comic sorts is concocted and the musical numbers are hauled in.

Mr. Crosby sings most of the latter, either solo or in company with his pals, and does very nicely by them, as he does by his droll and genial role. "Accentuate the Positive," which is sung with Mr. Tufts, is probably the best of the several Harold Arlen and Johnny Mercer tunes. Miss Hutton, in her broader characterization—meaning that of the more rambunctious sis—is also terrific in a gag song called "Strictly on My Own Tonight." Regarding Miss Hutton's dual performance, it should not be mistaken for high art, but it certainly can be commended as very vigorous virtuosity. And Mr. Tufts is dry and diverting as a mildly disturbing element.

There are several scenes in the picture of Waves in training which are atmospherically good, and the settings contrived for the Wave show are well above regulation grade. Paramount, in short, has been generous to the service in every respect. But the humor is the best part of the picture—and the best part of the humor is that which has Bing crooning in travesty of a famous "swooner" who shall be nameless (just this once).

D 28, 1944, 25:2

DUFFY'S TAVERN, screen play by Melvin Frank and Norman Panama, with additional sketches by Abram S. Burrows, Barney Dean, George White, Eddie Davis and Matt Brooks. Songs by Johnny Burke and James Van Heusen; directed by Hal Walker; produced by Paramount. At the Paramount.

Archie.....	Ed Gardner
Michael O'Malley.....	Victor Moore
Peter O'Malley.....	Marjorie Reynolds
Danny Murphy.....	Barry Sullivan
Pinnegan.....	Charles Cantor
Eddie.....	Eddie Green
Miss Dally.....	Ann Thomas

Bing Crosby, Betty Hutton, Paulette Goddard, Alan Ladd, Dorothy Lamour, Eddie Bracken, Brian Donlevy, Sonny Tufts, Veronica Lake, Arturo de Cordova, Jerry Fitzgerald, Cass Daley, Diana Lynn, Robert Benchley, William Demarest, Walter Abel, Billy De Wolfe, Johnny Coy, Miriam Franklyn, Howard da Silva and Gary, Phillip, Dennis and Lin Crosby.

By BOSLEY CROWTHER

Every so often Paramount throws a great big studio jamboree and gets every actor on the payroll to pitch in and do a turn. A script is usually written to serve as a schedule of events and a director is somewhere on the sidelines to see that things run off well. They are very cute fellows at Paramount. A camera records the events and then they sell the recording as a finished variety show. At least that's the general impression you get from seeing one of these films. This year's party is "Duffy's Tavern," and it came to the Paramount yesterday.

Borrowing the blowzy characteristics of the radio show of the same name, with Ed Gardner playing Archie, the polyglot keeper of the bar, and with other familiars of Duffy's showing up now and again, the story pretends to do no more than usher some comedy and the acts. It has to do with the efforts of Archie and Victor Moore, a sozzled patron of Duffy's, to revive a recording studio. And it loosely includes Barry Sullivan and Marjorie Reynolds as a romantic team.

Mr. Gardner, of course, murders language with his set of mangling vocal cords, which seems to excruciate the customers, and gets off a few first-rate gags, while Mr. Moore plays the fuddy-duddy with his studied clumsiness—all of which makes for low and languid comedy that is straight down an old familiar groove. Sticklers for genuine humor are likely to find it a bit—well, say, dull.

But plenty of Paramount energy has been thrown into the acts, which are rung in—as you can imagine—as an inevitable benefit show. Betty Hutton, the dynamite doxy, sings a nerve-jangle jingle, "The Hard Way," and Cass Daley performs her contortions while screaming "You Can't Blame a Gal." Bing Crosby and a chorus of assistants, including a likely assortment of studio "names," do a very amusing parody of "Swinging on a Star," which finishes a Robert Benchley recount of the high points in Bing's career. And Alan Ladd, Sonny Tufts, Paulette Goddard and many others show in routine revue skits.

Take it for what it is, a hodgepodge of spare-time clowning by the gang, including a large hunk of Archie, and you'll find "Duffy's Tavern" fair enough.

S 6, 1945, 23:3

'Bells of St. Mary's' Makes Its Debut at the Music Hall With Bing Crosby, Ingrid Bergman in the Chief Roles

THE BELLS OF ST. MARY'S, screen play by Dudley Nichols; directed and produced by Leo McCarey for RKO-Radio. At the Radio City Music Hall.

Father O'Malley.....	Bing Crosby
Sister Benedict.....	Ingrid Bergman
Mr. Bogardus.....	Henry Travers
Patey.....	Joan Carroll
Patey's mother.....	Martha Sleeper
Patey's father.....	William Gargan
Sister Michael.....	Ruth Donnelly
Dr. McKay.....	Rhys Williams
Eddie.....	Dickie Tyler
Mrs. Breen.....	Una O'Connor

By BOSLEY CROWTHER

If anyone had any wonder as to where Father Chuck O'Malley went when he walked off into the night-time at the end of "Going My Way," they need not wonder any longer. He went on to Project No. 2 in his series career of spreading sunshine which has been recorded for all the world to see. That project consists in bringing affluence to a failing parochial school which is run by a sister superior who is nobler

than she is worldly wise; in comforting this sister in illness and settling matters straight in several tattered lies. And it is imaged with humor and sentiment in "The Bells of St. Mary's," at the Music Hall.

In planning this project, however, Leo McCarey, who also planned "Going My Way," yielded too much to the temptation of trying to copy a success. He followed too closely the pattern of his previous delightful film, with the basic exception of including a character of genuine scope. Father O'Malley is generally consistent (and played by Bing Crosby, what else could he be?) but Sister Benedict has not the veracity of her counterpart character which was played by Barry Fitzgerald. She is much too precisely sugar-coated, too eagerly contrived, and she goes in for certain gymnastics which are just on the edge of being cheap. As a consequence, "The Bells of St. Mary's," although a plentiful and sometimes winning show, lacks the charm of its predecessor—and that comparison cannot be escaped.

When Father Chuck is settling at St. Mary's to assume the vacant pastorate, there is humor and promise in his gentle and sly tiffs with Sister Benedict. There is sympathy in his patient guidance of a small girl who is put in the school by a suspiciously wayward mother, and there is warmth in his singing of some songs. ("Adeste Fidelis," once over lightly, is the best and most seasonal of the lot.) There is likewise a cunning little episode—and the whole film is episodic, by the way—in which the children of Grade 1 put on their own Nativity play.

But a sequence in which Sister Benedict teaches a turn-the-other-cheek lad to box is purely contrived theatrics, uncomfortably close to burlesque—as, indeed, are all the obvious sight-gags which fetch their laughs from the incongruity of an athletic nun. And the whole story-line developed toward the wheeling of a building for the school, with Henry Travers as the landlord who is wheedled, is unconvincing and vaguely immoral. The way that poor landlord is "pressured" into giving up his building is some stunt!

In the role of Sister Benedict, Ingrid Bergman is exquisitely serene, radiantly beautiful and soft-spoken—the perfect picture of an idealized nun. And there are moments (NOT the close-up shot of her praying) in which she glows with a tenderness and warmth. But—more the script's fault than Miss Bergman's—her holiness smacks of Hollywood, and certainly she seems much too youthful to be the head of a parochial school.

As Father Chuck, Mr. Crosby is—well, you know—the same easy, confident Bing, tossing off slangy jokes and soft-soap with the sincerity of a practiced hand. His penchant for gags in this picture—snappy sayings—is a little more pronounced. Maybe his truck with Tin Pan Alley, after writing that hit song, is to blame. It is noticeable that he hovers in the background a little more than he did in "Going My Way." Mr. Travers is not well provided with a true role, and thus is under par, while Joan Carroll, Martha Sleeper and Ruth Donnelly are adequate in other parts.

Considering the film's sectarian nature, the most amusing and critically pertinent remark is passed by Father O'Malley when a student named Luther is introduced to him. "Luther?" remarks the startled father, "How did he get in here?" Somehow that innocent question struck us as being quite acute.

D 7, 1945, 26:2

Crosby, Hope and Lamour Take 'Road to Utopia,' New Film at the Paramount, and Come Up With Lightning-Like Gags

ROAD TO UTOPIA, screen play by Norman Panama and Melvin Frank; songs by James Van Heusen and Johnny Burke; directed by Hal Walker; produced by Paul Jones for Paramount. At the Paramount.

Duke Johnson.....	Bing Crosby
Chester Hooton.....	Bob Hope
Sal.....	Dorothy Lamour
Ace Larson.....	Douglas Dumbrille
Kate.....	Hillary Brooke
Le Bec.....	Jack LaRue
Sperry.....	Robert Barrat
McGurk.....	Nestor Paiva
Mr. Latimer.....	Will Wright
Narrator.....	Robert Benchley

By BOSLEY CROWTHER

Not since Charlie Chaplin was prospecting for gold in a Hollywood-made Alaska many long years ago has so much howling humor been swirled with so much artificial snow as it is in "Road to Utopia," which came to the Paramount yesterday. And not since "Road to Morocco" have Bing (Damon) Crosby and Bob (Pythias) Hope been so crazily mixed up in madness as they are in this current vagrancy. For the latest of Paramount's "Road" shows, in which the Messrs. Crosby and Hope again have as fellow-traveler the indestructible Dorothy Lamour, is a blizzard of fractious sport and clowning, a whirlwind of gags and travesty, a snowdrift of suffocating nonsense—and that is said without consulting a press book.

There is no point in telling anybody what sort of humor to expect when the Messrs. Hope and Crosby are turned loose together in a show. Their style of slugging each other with verbal discourtesies is quite as familiar as ice cream—at least to the patrons of films. And their can-you-top-this vein of jesting runs straight through our national attitude. The only difference, in this case, is that their style seems more refined, their timing a little more expert, their insults a little more acute. Bing and Bob have apparently been needling each other for so long that they naturally stitch along a pattern which shapes the personalities of both.

And the personalities of the rascals—Bing the debonair blade and Bob the bumbling show-off—are fully defined in this tale of a couple of vaudeville grifters caught in a race for an Alaskan gold mine. Mr. Hope is the chicken-hearted partner who wants to go back to New York; Mr. Crosby is the ad-

venturer who wants to woo fortune in the mining camps. And that's why (despite Bob's demurrers) they find themselves in roaring Skagway, holding a secret map to a gold mine which is really Miss Lamour's by rights, mistaken for two desperadoes and caught blindly between two villainous gangs.

Out of this lurid situation the Messrs. Crosby and Hope—with the help of the boys at Paramount—have ripped a titanic burlesque of brawny adventure pictures and of movies in general; indeed, A "Road" show is always an occasion for the cut-ups to have a marvelous time and in this case the comic inventors (scenarists and director) ran wild. The late Robert Benchley is employed as a sort of commentator on the film, who pops in the frame at odd moments to give a goofy explanation of the cinema craft. Actors from other pictures walk across the sets and the Messrs. Hope and Crosby several times address the audience. And, of course, the whole nature of the action is in the grand style of ha-ha ridicule.

But where this sort of clowning might be juvenile and monotonous in other hands it has rich comic quality in the smooth paws of the gentlemen involved. To catalogue gags is boring, so we reluctantly won't do so—other than to say the flow of same in this picture is abundant and sustaining to the end. Also the boys manage neatly to clean up a few poolroom jokes which have a particular subtlety, at least for the wise guys in the back. Several songs are also brought into the picture by the Messrs. Crosby and Hope and Miss Lamour in one or another combination, all of them handled pleasantly.

We understand this picture was made a few years ago and is just now released. The reason? They were waiting till the laugh-celling was off. Now look out for inflation. It will skyrocket laughter throughout the land.

F 28, 1946, 20:2

CLASSIFIED

RECORDS

Like many of you, I have at times purchased Crosby records I didn't need because I thought other collectors might want them. As a result, I have accumulated well over 200 78 rpm records, a few 45s, and 25 or more 12" 33-1/3 LPs that I would sell or trade for LPs that I lack. There are far too many titles to prepare a list, and I have no interest in becoming involved in an auction. In fact, I don't care if I sell the records or not but feel like a hoarder with so many records that some collector must be looking for. Write me your needs and tell me what duplicate LPs you have to trade. I don't plan to collect anymore 78s but will part with most of those that I have acquired. Philip W. Smith, 710 South Lynn St., Champaign, Illinois 61820.

For Sale - My duplicate collection of Bing Crosby 78 speed records--all in extra new condition. The collection consists of 71 Blue Deccas, 78 Black Deccas, 1 Red Decca, 6 Paul Whiteman Picture Label, 20 Victors, 5 Eng. Col. from original Col., 8 Eng. Col. from original Brunswick, 2 Eng. Brunswick from original Brunswick, 1 French Brunswick from original Brunswick, 27 English & Belgian Deccas from U.S. Decca, 64 French, English & German Brunswick from U.S. Decca, 1 Omega. A total of 284 records. Price is \$150 for the collection. Postage extra. Detailed info upon request. Mike Keptanis, 390 Wadsworth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10040.

Bing Crosby Want List: Brunswick 6515 What Do I Care It's Home, Col. 1974 Waiting at the End of the Road, Col. 50098 Christmas Melodies-Silent Night, Victor 39003 Let 'Em Eat Cake, Okay 41228 I'm Crazy Over You, Decca 18912 Iowa, Indian Col. 30158 By The Light of the Silvery Moon, Indian Col. 30175 But Not For Me, Aust. Decca 5771 Angels of Mercy, Aust. Decca 5835 Don't Break the Spell, Aust. Decca 5839 Ol' Man River, Decca White Label: Lift Up Your Hearts, Stabat Mater, Silent Night, Adeste Fidelis, Decca White Label: Why Do I like You, V Discs 24A You Are My Sunshine-It's a Long Way to Tipperary, 49N Small Fry, 128A Please-A Yank in a Tank-What Do you Do in the Infantry, 661A Shoo Fly Pie-Dear Old Donegal, 700A There's A Small Hotel, 729A Tangerine-Arthur Murray Taught Me Dancing-I Remember You, 763A The One I Love, 893A You Call Everybody Darling. Contact: William J. Elliott, 874 Wilson Drive, Dover, Delaware 19901.

MISCELLANEOUS

I am searching for records, radio, clippings, other items of all types on Judy Garland. Can you help me or do you know of any possible sources? I also need radio & rarities on Lana Turner. Also LP records of shows & soundtracks, rare radio, pre 1950 comics. I have thousands of items to trade; movie posters & mags, rare records, much uncirculated radio etc. 1930s on. Bing in all categories. Contact: Frederick H. McFadden, R.D. 4 Westernville Road, Rome, New York 13440.

SNAPSHOTS

- No. 1021 - Bing alone - 1973 - hunting
 - No. 1022 - Bing alone - 1973 - fishing
 - No. 1023 - Crosby Family & John Byner - Christmas Show - 1972
 - No. 1024 - Crosby Family - Christmas Show - 1972
 - No. 1025 - Bing alone - Christmas Show - 1972
 - No. 1026 - Bing and Kathryn - 1971
 - No. 1027 - Bing alone - 1974
- Contact: Rena Albanesi, 54 Quinsey Dr., Bridgeport, Conn.
06606.



The Mid-West Chapter of the American Club Crosby NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Number 3

Chicago, Illinois

June 1, 1974

WHAT'S NEW? ... Well, it's been an eventful 6 months since the last Bingang. We were all very disappointed that Pat Sullivan moved to Chico, California, but of course wish her luck in her new home. Arne Fogel came down for a visit in January for a couple of days. We managed to clean out the local record stores of Bing records, and of course had a great two days swapping stories and information and listening to records. Arne is an entertainer himself; he has his own band (rock band) and is an up and coming vocalist. Arne, being an accomplished musician, is an expert on alternate takes, a topic I'm rather fond of myself. Arne confirmed what I reported in the last newsletter, namely that the three songs "Avalon," "Chinatown My Chinatown," and "Alabama Bound" on the Longines bonus album accompanying its "Best of the Telephone Hour" set are different takes from those issued on the "New Tricks" LP. Arne reminded me that on the Telephone Hour Show that Bing appeared on for a 15 minute spot, in 1965 I think it was, Bing appeared to be only mouthing the words of the songs which were pre-recorded. I had forgotten this, but when Arne raised the point, I remembered getting the same impression from watching the show. So perhaps the tracks used were actually pre-recorded some 9 or 10 years prior to the TV show, and loaned to Bell by Decca. In any event, I got virtually no response to my revelation of this previously undiscovered or at least unreported set of alternate takes. I figured this would be big news in some circles. Oh well. These tracks do deserve more investigation as to their source and date (the backing is not that of the small Buddy Cole group on the New Tricks LP). Any Sherlocks out there? Arne raised another point about the Bell show in 1965 that I hadn't realized. Arne believes that this was the last show on which Bing was billed primarily as a vocalist, rather than an entertainer or personality.

In the last issue of BING magazine, published in England, Bert Bishop stated that he could not account for a Bing record having been recorded in the year 1969. A check of my files indicates that he appears to be correct. If this is true, it means that 1969 was the only year since 1926 in which Bing failed to make at least one record. I had thought that the Goldilocks LP was recorded in 1969, but the TV show (from which the LP was taken) was first shown, according to my records, in March 1970. Now it might have been taped in 1969, but that's about all I can suggest. It would really be a shame if Bing only missed the one year since 1926.

I received very nice letters over the past 6 months from Mr. Chester Rose, a long time Crosby collector in Beloit, Wisconsin; Phil Smith in Champaign, Ill., and Colin Pugh in England. Their praise of this newsletter was most appreciated. I know they and everyone else will understand if I fail to answer all letters, or am long delayed in replying. Family and business matters eat up most of my time, and it is only the blessing of vacation periods that enable me to devote the time that I do to Crosby matters. All my friends and penpals will be pleased to hear that I will definitely purchase a standard Sony tape deck this week, so I'll be able to swap tapes more

easily; and those who've promised to make tapes for me in the past will now, I hope, deluge me with offers of Bing tapes! Incidentally, if any of you do not receive BING magazine from England, write immediately to John Bassett, "Bingville," 72 Stromness Road, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS2 4JQ, England. You'll never regret it.

As Pat can attest, the deal with Biograph is not as yet working out well for us Crosby fans. We know of no plans for a second Biograph LP, and the people at Biograph have not been in touch with us. Frankly, it might have been better if Biograph hadn't bought the license to issue Bing tracks from Columbia. Columbia appears to have embarked on a general re-issue program. They have rereleased the Epic 2-LP set on Columbia (CE2E 201, mono), and have put together a number of fine 2-LP sets on other artists like Fred Astaire, Cab Calloway, Eddie Condon, Ethel Waters, etc. I doubt that there will be a Bing 2-LP set that's brand new until the smoke clears up on the Biograph situation. All we can do is wait and see (and hope).

Jim Keegan and I prepared a special tape program to be aired on Bing's birthday, May 2. It was to have appeared on the Roy Leonard Show on radio station WGN here in Chicago. Through a series of foul-ups, the show was never aired, and Roy's tribute to Bing consisted of the usual recordings (White Christmas, Road to Morocco, etc.) Things finally got straightened out, but a little too late. The show may be aired later, but as a consolation, Roy played "Tie A Yellow Ribbon" on his show Saturday morning, May 4. He also mentioned the American Crosby Club and my address. As a result I got a number of letters and inquiries about the club and how to get the record, so welcome to all of you who heard the show and wrote me those nice letters. I've now sent replies to everyone, so I hope all of you will become active in the club. It's a real shame that "Tie A Yellow Ribbon" hasn't even been issued in this country, let alone promoted.

One special note on a most happy event that occurred in the past 6 months - and a prayer of thanks - for Bing's recovery from his recent illness.

GRAY MATTER (or in this instance, GREEN MATTER)

Dave Rapp asked me to write about what I thought were the rarest Bing LPs at the present time, and what price dealers were asking, and what one ought to pay and not to pay. Since I've actively been buying Bing LPs here in Chicago and on the East Coast over the last 4 years (as well as subscribing to many bid lists and trading records overseas), I think I have gained some expertise on these questions, and they could stand a couple of articles for the benefit of new members anyway. So here goes.

Of Bing's U.S. commercial LPs, the 10 inch LPs (made in the early 1950's), are generally regarded as the rarest. Most 12 inch LPs are now deleted, including almost all of the Deccas. Of course the 10 inch LPs have been deleted since the early 50's, while the Deccas were mostly dropped about 5 years ago. If one is willing to dig very diligently, one can come up with most of Bing's 12 inch LPs. I have in fact done that over the last 4 years, but they get scarcer and more expensive every year (fortunately, I had most of the 10 inchers from the beginning). For some reason, High Tor (DL 8272, Br-E LAT 8154) is the most wanted LP among collectors, at least the ones I know. One friend recently paid \$50.00 for it in New York and that's the only copy I've heard of for sale since the record was released in 1955 and then quickly deleted. Julie Andrews is featured on the album, one of her

first recordings I believe, and Bing does sing some incredibly beautiful songs. I can't quibble with the fairness of that price from either the buyer's or seller's point of view. Another most sought after LP is the 2 record set, How The West Was Won (RCA LOP/LSO 6070, and U.K. equivalent). Again two beautiful records featuring a lot of Bing; everyone who has ever heard it, whether a Bing fan or not, has always been impressed when they hear it for the first time. It was released in 1959 and quickly deleted - the songs have never to my knowledge been re-released. Further, over the past 4 years, I've never seen it for sale on a bid list or in a record shop. It's hard to put a price tag on it, but if you're not satisfied with a tape, \$50.00 would certainly be a reasonable price. I suspect neither of these albums were pressed in very large quantities for some reason.

Two other Decca 12 inch LPs that are almost impossible to find are Blue Hawaii (DL 8269) - issued in U.S. only) and Twilight on the Trail (DL 8365, Br-E 8253). And the early records in the Bing's Hollywood series are very scarce. On all, I would say that a price of \$15.00 is fair, and those issued in England can still be gotten from England, but you must be prepared to write a lot of letters. Bing's Buddies and Beaus was not issued here, but only on English Brunswick LAT 8306. That makes it a rarity over here, but again you can probably get a copy from England eventually for \$15.00 or so.

Some LPs have only a minute or two of Bing on them; for example, Les Poupees de Paris (RCA LOC-1090), John McCormick in Opera & Song (2 LP set, ASCO A-110), Lullaby Time (DL 8110). All are scarce. I paid \$20.00 recently for LOC-1090 and \$10.00 for the McCormick set. The price for LOC-1090 was a little high perhaps, but if one is a completist, as I am, and must have everything of Bing's, even when he isn't singing, then it's a reasonable price. A year ago, I refused to pay another shop in N.Y. \$35.00 for LOC-1090 and \$25.00 for the McCormick set, so I'm happy about it now. Collectors often get the feeling that if they don't pay an outlandish price at once, they'll never see the record again, but I operate on the principle that everything, if it turns up once, will turn up again. And bad bargainers, of course, drive up the prices for everyone else. I know of one collector who paid close to \$100.00 for the McCormick set. Now really!!

Now on the 10 inch LPs, the 3 Columbia 10 inchers are more or less common. For most Decca 10 inch Bing LPs, plan to pay between \$18.00 and \$25.00 in most record stores back east, and perhaps a few dollars less in the midwest. English and California prices are close to New York prices, I understand. Now if you have patience, believe it or not, many 10 inch LPs will start to show up in record stores, and bid lists. Some are going at \$50.00 each, asking price, and I think this is totally unreasonable. Bing & Connee (DL 5390, Br-E LA 8558) seems to be much sought after. I know one store wanted \$50.00 for it, but I recently purchased a copy for \$15.00 here in Chicago over the counter. It also recently appeared on a bid list. So again, patience pays off. The value of a 10 inch LP should logically be related to whether the tracks were later re-released on a 12 inch LP that is easier to get. When AH 145, Beloved Hymns, was issued in England, this should have dropped the bottom out of the market in the 10 inch version (DL 5351, Br-E LA 8734), and I believe it did. But it doesn't always work that way. Remember, most record dealers are not Crosby buffs like you and I. They don't usually know what has or has not been reissued, so the natural tendency is to ask a high price for all Crosby 10 inch Lps, even the Christmas ones. If

you have a regular dealer in used records that you patronize, you must educate that person. Most collectors do know better. One New York shop has had DL 5052, Going My Way/Bells of St. Mary's, and DL 5284, Mr. Music, on the shelves for the last year. The asking prices are \$50.00 and \$40.00 respectively. Utterly outrageous. All tracks were reissued in the Bing's Hollywood set, and some are still available. But they look like original soundtrack LPs to the uninformed.

I hope this has been helpful and interesting to all. My main point is that you don't have to pay extremely high prices for Bing LPs if you are careful and know what you're doing. For the items you must pay \$15.00 for, you can make it up by frequenting Salvation Army stores, junk shops, etc. where you may get a real find for 25¢. Get to know the English "scene." Much is available there that isn't here. In fact, one explanation for the scarcity of some items may be that they were not issued in England, so everytime one shows up here, it is purchased and sent abroad. Bing magazine is of course a great way to get to know as fine and helpful group of people as there are anywhere. Another helpful hint is with respect to bidding on records on bid lists. In the opinion, the best source of microgrooves is VJM (write to me for details on this fine bid list). Ask the person whose list you're bidding from to tell you, if you don't win the record, how close you came. You'll soon get an idea of how much the records of Bing, or others are worth if you bid regularly.

One final suggestion on this topic. Newer collectors must keep in mind that there are quite a few albums on Ace of Hearts, Coral and MCA currently available in England. Some can also be obtained in the larger stores in N.Y., Chicago and on the west coast. They form an impressive start of a Crosby collection for anybody.

DISCOGRAPHICALLY SPEAKING

Herewith a list of recently issued records that feature Bing:

- 1) RCA-French 741.093 (Black & White Series #90) - The Bix Beiderbecke Legend, Vol. 4 "Alternate Bix 1926/1928" - contains 18 tracks including 5 that feature Bing: Changes-Tk. 3(excerpt), Mary-Tk. 2, From Monday On-Tk. 6, My Pet-Tk. 3, Louisiana-Tk. 1.
 - 2) The Golden Age of Opera EJS-120 - Ezio Pinza - 2 1946 duets with Bing - Timber and You Are My Sunshine.
 - 3) Curtain Calls No. 100/1 - Dick Tracy in B-Flat
 - 4) Curtain Calls No. 100/2 - Both sides of Bing include Rollicking Rockaway Raoul, Argument with Jack Kapp, Robins and Roses parody, Jimmy Valentine (fluff), Wrap Your Troubles in Dreams (fluff), Jingle Bells (fluff), Blues Serenade (fluff), The Seventh Air Force Song, Your All-Time Flop Parade with J. Garland, Andrews Sisters, Promotion disc for the Great John L with Hope, F. Langford, Sinatra, Iowa (fluff), Always (parody), Sketch with Hope, I Positively Refuse to Sing (from "We're Not Dressing") Only Forever (from KMH show with Mary Martin), Where the Turf Meets the Surf (parody from KMH)
- Both Curtain Call LPs cost \$10.00 each & are available at the Colony Record Shop, 1619 Broadway, New York, 10019. Curtain Calls No. 100/1 is identical in content to Record 2 in the For Collectors Only set selling for \$50.00 in N.Y. No. 100/2 differs from Record 1 of the Collectors Only set in the following respects: I've Got the Girl, Angels of Mercy, Junk Ain't Junk No More, I'm Saving a Dime are on the FCO set but not on CC. Jingle Bells, A Blues Serenade, I Positively Refuse to Sing, Only Forever, Where the Turf Meets the Surf are on CC but not on FCO.

- 5) Totem 1007 - Bing & Al - The Bing Crosby Program, Dec. 28, 1949 and The Bing Crosby Program, Jan. 4, 1950.
- 6) Totem 1008 - Bing Crosby On The Air - Woodbury Radio Program, Sept. 18, 1934, Kraft Music Hall Selections, Cremo Singer selections.
- 7) Totem 1004 - Lux Radio Theater broadcast of "She Loves Me Not" - Nov. 8, 1937.
- 8) Columbia CE2E 201 - The Bing Crosby Story, Vol. 1 (mono) - same as the Epic 2-LP set now deleted. Great that this is re-issued.
- 9) Springboard LP SPB 4008 - Hey Jude/Hey Bing - same as Amos LP.
- 10) Columbia 2-LP set KG 31564 - Eddie Condon's World of Jazz - contains Stay on the Right Side of the Road-Tk. B (formerly only available on the privately issued LP IAJRC-No. 2) The English equivalent of this set is CBS-E (S) 67273.
- 11) 45 rpm - MCA Records (U.S. MCA-65014) Happy Birthday/Auld Lang Syne/Anniversary Song (as Decca 9-24273).
- 12) Family-Italian LP SFR-DP 715 - Harlem Speaks - includes both takes of St. Louis Blues.
- 13) Family-Italian LP SFR-DP 660 - George Gershwin/P. Whiteman - includes Metropolis on which Bing is heard in the chorus.
- 14) Legend WM 1973 - Bing and Judy Together.
- 15) Critter CBHC-8901 - Bing and Hoppy.
- 16) Star-Tone 215 - Academy Award Winners on the Air - includes awards presentation to Bing Crosby for "Going My Way," Clark Gable & Bing duetting "Ragtime Cowboy Joe" (1937) and Hattie McDaniel singing "A Little Bird Told Me" (assisted by Bing Crosby-1949)
- 17) B/J 202 - Christmas Star - Bing sings with Old St. Mary's Choir, San Francisco.
- 18) Joker-Italian SM 3278 - The Great Vocalists (Historia-German H-640) - includes "All You Want To Do Is Dance."
- 19) MGM-English 2353.084 The Magic of Bing and Louis (another reissue of the Bing/Satchmo album)
- 20) Stanyan-U.S. 2SR 10066 2-LP set "Salute to the Hollywood Canteen" - includes Bing & Connee's "Yes Indeed."
- 21) Windmill WMD-190 Louis Armstrong & Bing Crosby on Stage - English (same as Family-Italian LP SFR-DP 655) with a couple of tracks deleted.
- 22) Paramount-English SFPL 290 - Paper Moon - same as U.S. Paramount PAS 1012 - features "Just One More Chance."
- 23) Daybreak - French 2c 062-92.972 "Noels Americains" and Daybreak-English DAL 2007 "A Time to be Jolly" - both the same as the U.S.
- 24) Coral-English CPS 112 - Bing & the Andrews Sisters, Vol. 3 and CPS 113 - Daydreaming. Latter includes Day Dreaming, You Are The One, Between A Kiss and a Sigh, I'm Building A Sailboat of Dreams, Wrap Your Troubles in Dreams, The Waltz of Memory, Do You Care, Somebody Loves Me, Darling Je Vous Aime Beaucoup, You and I, Don't Break the Spell, Maybe, I'd Know You Anywhere, Miss You.
- 25) RCA-US DKS-002, 5 LP set called 5 Golden Records (enhanced stereo) - Record 1 (PRS-339-1) includes Bing's Old Man River (w/Whiteman) and I Surrender Dear (w/Arnheim) - Record 3 (PRS-340-1) includes Bing & Rosemary Clooney singing "On a Slow Boat to China." Special product set for Avon.

There are a large number of other "Special Product" LPs, mostly Christmas items, that feature Bing which I've come across lately. Time does not permit listing them all this time unfortunately, but perhaps next time it might be useful to put together a list of all RCA, Columbia and MCA-Decca Special Product LPs that feature Bing. I would be most grateful for any help on this project that any of you might be able to offer. For example, Columbia Special LP C 11083 called Joyous Christmas, Vol. 6 includes Bing's "Just What I Wanted

for Christmas." The LP was produced for the Beneficial Finance people. The jacket states that Bing also appeared on the previous year's issue, Vol. 5. Does anyone know the song and LP number? These special LPs have become so numerous and are so obscure that even our English friends seem to have lost track. So any information you have on such albums would be most appreciated. Keep in mind that I am still working on projects like this with the ultimate goal in mind of accurately up-dating the Road to Bing Crosby discography.

One final discographical point I had to mention concerns what Arne Fogel (and I) believes to be a hitherto undiscovered alternate take. Compare a 78 copy of "I Can't Begin to Tell You" that's clearly marked Take A with a microgroove version of this same song and compare specifically Carmen Cavillaro's piano introductions. Arne is convinced that they are different, and he's convinced me. Any separate opinions on this? The 78 we used was Decca 23457, and the micros we used in comparison were Decca 45 9-23457 and DL 4527 (set DXB184). We believe, therefore, that the microgrooves were pressed from an alternate master, probably take B.

Well, that's it for now. See you next time.

Ken Gray

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Editor's note: Thanks to Ken for another invaluable compilation of currently available Crosby material. Only addition is MLP-705 "When Radio Was King." It features one complete Bing Crosby Show with guests Louis Armstrong and Rose Marie. Price is \$5.00 and it can be purchased from Memorabilia Records, Box 24, Northridge, Calif. 91324.

